

## The Botany of Kauai Island, Hawaii, as Seen on Captain Cook's Voyage, 1778<sup>1</sup>

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CAPTAIN JAMES COOK DISCOVERED the Sandwich (= Hawaiian) Islands in 1778, and landed at Waimea on Kauai, or, as he called it, *Atooi*. In search of fresh water and food supplies, the crew traded with the natives who came out in canoes, and they landed several times. Only with difficulty could they control thievery, especially of metal objects, and they were bothered on shore by the curious crowds of natives. Twice they were forced to shoot guns at them to keep them at a little distance.

Cook himself reported (1784:227), "Besides the vegetable articles bought by us as refreshments, amongst which were, at least, five or six varieties of plantains, the island produces bread-fruit; though it seems to be scarce, as we saw only one tree, which was large, and had some fruit upon it. There are also a few cocoa-palms; yams, as we were told, for we saw none; the *kappe* of the Friendly Islands, or Virginia *arum*; the *etooa* tree, and sweet smelling *gardenia*, or *cape dooe*. We saw several trees of the *dooe dooe*, so useful at Otaheite, as bearing the oily nuts, which are stuck upon a kind of skewer, and burnt as candles. Our people saw them used, in the same manner, on Oneeheouw. We were not on shore at Atooi but in the day time, and then we saw the natives wearing these nuts, hung on strings, round the neck. There is a species of *sida*, or Indian mallow, somewhat altered, by the climate, from what we saw at Christmas Island; the *morinda citrifolia*, which is called *none*; a species of *convolvulus*; the *ava*, or intoxicating pepper; and great numbers of gourds. These last grow to a very large size,

and are of a vast variety of shapes, which probably is effected by art. Upon the dry sand, about the village, grew a plant, that we had never seen in these seas, of the size of a common thistle, and prickly, like that; but bearing a fine flower, almost resembling a white poppy. This, with another small one, were the only uncommon plants, which our short excursion gave us an opportunity of observing."

This thistlelike plant, with a white poppylike flower, is without any doubt the endemic *Argemone glauca* Pope. It was apparently the only plant specimen collected on Kauai by the expedition. The specimen is in the British Museum (Natural History) in London, and is labeled as from Captain Cook's third voyage, collected by David Nelson. However, it is quite clear from the records that Nelson did not go ashore on Kauai, but Cook recorded that William Anderson, a surgeon and botanist, and John Webber, an artist, did accompany him on his short walk inland to a *heiau* (= temple). Anderson suffered from consumption, and died on the voyage, 6 months after they left Kauai. The younger botanist, Nelson, made the only considerable collection of plants on Hawaii Island of the Sandwich group. Nelson himself did not determine or write up the Hawaiian plants. They were determined by Daniel Solander or by Robert Brown. Both were excellent botanists, but there was some confusion in the handling of this collection. For instance, several specimens were labeled "Sandwich Is., Capt. Cook's 2nd & 3rd Voyages." This was inexact, since the second voyage did not visit the Sandwich Islands. Despite the label on the *Argemone*, it is quite clear that it was collected by William Anderson, not by David Nelson, who did not set foot on Kauai.

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## CULTIVATED, ESPECIALLY CROP, PLANTS

- Saccharum officinarum* L., "too" (= kō)  
sugar cane  
*Schizostachyum glaucifolium* (Rupr.) Munro,  
"ohe," bamboo  
*Cocos nucifera* L., "eeneeoo" (= niu),  
cocoa-trees  
*Alocasia macrorrhiza* (L.) Sweet, "appe,"  
"kappe" (= 'ape), Virginia arum  
*Colocasia esculenta* (L.) Schott, var. *anti-*  
*quorum* (Schott) Hubb. & Rehd.,  
"tarow" (= taro), or eddy root  
*Cordyline terminalis* (L.) Kunth, "etee"  
(= ti)  
*Dioscorea alata* L., "oohe" (= uhi), yam  
*Musa X paradisiaca* L., plantain (= mai'a or  
cooking banana)  
*Piper methysticum* Forst. f., "ava" or "ova"  
(= 'awa)  
*Artocarpus altilis* (Parkins. ex Z) Fosb.,  
"ooroo" (= 'ulu), breadfruit  
*Broussonetia papyrifera* (L.) Vent., "touta"  
or "ewououtte" (= wauke)  
*Aleurites moluccana* (L.) Willd., "dooe  
dooe" (= kukui)  
*Ipomoea Batatas* (L.) Poir., "hooarra"  
(= 'uala), potatoes  
*Cordia subcordata* Lam., (as *C. sebestena*),  
"etooa" (= kou)  
*Morinda citrifolia* L., "none" (= noni)  
*Lagenaria siceraria* (Molina) Standl., "ova"  
(= ipu), gourd

## CULTIVATED ORNAMENTALS

- Cordyline terminalis* (L.) Kunth, "etee"  
(= ti), with colored leaves  
*Gardenia taitensis* DC., "tearre" (= tiare,  
Tahiti), Cape jasmine  
 The presence of *Gardenia* is of consider-  
able interest. The bush has handsome  
foliage, and the pretty white blossoms with  
an enchanting fragrance are a favorite hair  
ornament of the young women of Tahiti and  
elsewhere in Polynesia. It is apparently the  
only plant used solely as an ornament that  
was introduced to Hawaii by the early  
Polynesian colonizers. The vernacular name,  
"tearre" or "tiare," is Tahitian, not Ha-  
waiian. Evidently Cook or Anderson re-  
membered the shrub and its name from  
earlier contacts with it in Tahiti.

## NATIVE PLANTS

- Pandanus* sp., the hala, or screw pine  
*Argemone glauca* Pope, prickly white poppy,  
(= kala)  
*Sida* sp., "areemah" or "hereema"  
(= 'ilima), or Indian mallow  
*Ipomoea* sp. (as *Convolvulus*)

## LITERATURE CITED

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